

[Let's Get Started](#) by [Luddleston](#)

Series: [One Plus One](#) [3]

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Summary:

Keith's been cautious about dating for the past five years, after all, it's tough to introduce your new boyfriend to your kid.

But Lance is something else, and he's starting to make Keith glad he waited around for someone like him.

1. January

Keith muted the TV, cutting off the news anchor in the middle of her scripted segment on the worst snowstorm the county had seen in twenty years. "How bad is it out there?" he called, as Lance shut the door behind himself before any more cold air got in.

"Pretty bad," he said, "I tried to brush off my car and I'm pretty sure there was a net *increase* of snow."

Oliver had the blinds pulled up and his face pressed against the window. His breath smudged the glass as he quietly said, "I'm gonna build the biggest snowman ever," to himself, awestruck at the white-out he could only sort of see in the darkness.

"I'll wait it out another hour, see if it slows down," Lance said, pausing at the mat inside the front door to stomp the snow off his boots.

"Weather says it's going to last all night," Keith said. "We're supposed to get like fourteen inches. You're staying."

Lance paused midway through pulling his coat off. "What? No, I couldn't--"

"You can," Keith said, "I don't mind." Actually, having another person next to him in bed tonight would be a lot warmer--no, Keith, don't go there. Lance would insist on sleeping on the couch anyway, because he was a gentleman and they'd only been on a half a dozen dates so far, three of which had included Oliver. Keith wasn't sure if those counted. Was it a date if you felt weird about kissing because your kid was hanging out with you?

Oliver peeled himself away from the windowpane, and scrambled over to dive onto the couch next to Keith. "Dad! Am I gonna get a snow day?"

"Tomorrow's Saturday, buddy. You don't go to school anyways."

Lance chuckled, hanging his coat back up and unlacing his shoes. "If it keeps going like this, we might get one in a couple days, though." He

stepped over the wet spot his boots left on the tile and joined them, leaning on the arm of the couch on Keith's other side. He looked down at Keith, resting a hand on his shoulder, his palm radiating heat through Keith's sweater. "Are you seriously okay with...?"

He glanced at Oliver, and Keith realized why he was so hesitant. Lance made an effort not to encroach on their family, had told Keith jokingly that he wasn't gonna freak Oliver out by trying to be his new dad, or anything.

As much as Keith appreciated Lance carefully trying not to force himself into Oliver's life before he was welcome, this was ridiculous. "Lance. We're in the middle of a blizzard, I'm not letting you go out in that." He rested a hand on Lance's knee like he was completing a circuit between them. "You can't drive in the snow, anyway."

The corner of Lance's mouth ticked into a half-smile. "Is this the part where you start singing, 'but baby, it's cold outside'?"

"Absolutely not."

Oliver burst into laughter at the idea of Keith singing anything, pausing only to start telling Lance that Keith sang at the top of his lungs while he cleaned the house. Thankfully, Keith could easily steer him away from embarrassing him any further with the words, "do you guys want to make hot chocolate?"

There was a resounding yes from both Oliver and Lance.

Keith set a pair of mugs on the counter and grabbed the half-empty milk bottle from the fridge, getting about as far as unscrewing the top before being stopped in his tracks by Lance saying, "what are you doing," in what was probably the flattest, most serious Keith had ever heard his voice.

"I was gonna stick these in the microwave?" he said, yielding only because Lance drank way more hot chocolate than Keith did (which wasn't hard), so he probably knew what he was doing.

"Dude, you can't put the milk in first," Lance said, "the mix doesn't dissolve right." The latter half of his explanation was hard to hear over him dislodging pots and pans in Keith's cabinets to find a saucepan. Once he did, he triumphantly set it on one of the burners, proclaiming, "you make it on the stove, Keith."

"Yeah, *Keith*," Oliver echoed, and Keith pressed his fingers over his mouth to keep from bursting into laughter at Oliver acting like a tiny hot-chocolate-policy enforcer.

"Alright, fine, show me your ways," he said, leaning with his back against the counter, surrendering his kitchen to Lance.

"Yeah, yeah, watch and learn."

Lance didn't do anything special, except for maybe the part where he sprinkled some cinnamon over the top, which Oliver was just as enchanted by as everything else Lance did. "It's better than when Dad makes it," he decided, holding his mug with both hands to sip it.

Keith held up a hand in surrender. "Okay, I give. I'm changing my ways, alright?"

Oliver mumbled, "you better," around the rim of the mug.

Lance's laugh was bright and cheerful, and, as usual, made Keith feel warm, and a little bit lighter. "You want some?" he asked, "I can make another one, no problem."

"Nah. I don't like cocoa that much," Keith said, which made Oliver shake his head like Keith was a lost cause. Maybe he was, in this case in particular.

He made himself a cup of green tea instead, which Lance tried and proclaimed, "gross, needs sugar."

Typical.

Oliver stood by and sipped his cocoa while Lance and Keith turned furniture to make a frame for a blanket fort, but he set his mug down and enthusiastically helped decorate with his giant dinosaur pillow and the fluffiest blankets they had. Keith dug a string of white fairy lights out of the Christmas decorations they'd just packed away, which gave the otherwise dark living room a gentle glow, turning Lance's smile even softer.

They carefully set their mugs on a bare spot of floor just inside the makeshift tent and piled in, Oliver wedged between them. Keith set his laptop a short distance away, starting up a movie, the DVD whirring as it started to spin.

"This is the best way to spend a snowstorm," Lance declared in a whisper, as they watched the opening credits of *the Aristocats*.

"Yeah," Oliver said quietly, and if Keith used his normal algorithm of volume-to-energy-level, he predicted Oliver would fall asleep about fifteen minutes into the movie.

He wasn't wrong. Shortly after finishing his cocoa, Oliver nodded off, his head buried in his dinosaur pillow, only a mess of curls and the smushed side of his face visible. Keith brushed Oliver's hair out of his face and smacked at his laptop keys until the movie was barely audible. After he had the singing cats quieted down, he reached across Oliver's back to take Lance's hand.

Lance turned his head to smile at Keith, the fairy lights reflecting in his eyes, competing with the blue of them. "Thanks," he said.

"You know I wouldn't..."

"Not for that. Thanks for letting me be a part of your family tonight."

Lance had told Keith about a week ago, on another coffeeshop date (curled against each other on the couch closest to the fireplace), that the hardest thing about his job was that it kept him so far away from his family. They were still connected, mostly because of Lance and his siblings' efforts to Skype weekly and keep their family group chat constantly lit up with

notifications. Lance frequently told Keith what they thought of him--well, what they thought of what Lance had told them about him--and Keith knew that if Lance could, he'd drag them all up north with him.

He'd also admitted to Keith that one of the things he was most looking forward to in life was starting a family of his own.

"You're welcome," Keith said, and it didn't come out like the usual response to "thank you." It was more like *you're welcome to stay*. "You can... you can be part of it any night, you know?"

Lance tilted his head to press a kiss to Keith's knuckles, a charmingly romantic response to Keith's less-than-charming attempt at a romantic response.

"I'm glad you're here," Keith said. "Nobody I'd rather wait out a snowstorm with." He squeezed Lance's fingers once before pulling away, setting his hand atop Oliver's head. "I'm sure he'd agree if he was awake."

"Speaking of," Lance said, brushing his fingers over the back of Keith's hand, pushing himself up into a seated position, still crouched over a little because the roof of their blanket fort hung low enough to brush the top of his head. "I think it's bedtime."

Keith nudged Oliver semi-awake, until he was lucid enough to hold on when Keith picked him up and carried him in the direction of his bedroom. He heard the kitchen sink run as Lance rinsed out their mugs from earlier, and when he had finished tucking Oliver in, he found the living room almost completely dark, the fairy lights unplugged, Lance leaning against the wall in the blue glow of the automatic night-light. Blue suited him, Keith thought.

"The couches are kind of a mess," Keith observed, because he didn't have a way to bring up the idea of Lance sharing his bed. Lance hummed softly and nodded, stepping closer to him, his arms settling comfortably around Keith's waist.

"I don't mind taking the couch," Lance said, close enough that his forehead bumped against Keith's.

"I don't mind you sharing my bed."

Lance breathed a laugh that sounded relieved and bent to kiss him once, soft and brief, like the one he'd given Keith earlier that night to greet him. "Good. I think I'd like that better, anyway."

"Yeah," Keith said, pausing between words to kiss Lance again. "I've slept on that couch before--" he fit a hand to the back of Lance's neck to keep him where he wanted him, kissed him again, "--when I woke up, my back was killing me."

Lance laughed against his mouth and then kissed him long and deep, leaving him no room to keep teasing. Keith made a soft noise into the kiss, fingertips ruffling up the back of Lance's hair, and Lance held him a little tighter, as warm and enthusiastic as always. Keith realized in the back of his head that making out with his boyfriend while his kid was asleep twenty feet and one open bedroom door away, might not have been his best idea. Oliver had been known to wander into Keith's bedroom whenever he had a bad dream or needed a glass of water or just happened to be awake and assumed Keith would be, too. Plus, it wasn't like he was sleeping hard enough not to hear anything.

On the other hand, Lance's mouth was very nice.

Keith hummed against his lips before pulling away, making the mature, adult decision to stop kissing his boyfriend in the living room, followed by the decision to just kiss Lance in the bedroom instead.

They ended up curled on the bed next to each other, Keith's head nestled into Lance's chest, Lance stroking his fingers through Keith's long hair. They'd stopped making out like teenagers, but Keith still had his arm around Lance, tracing his vertebrae. Lance's breathing was starting to slow, and Keith thought he might have been falling asleep. Keith was still awake, too unused to sharing his bed with another person to relax entirely.

Lance ducked his head and brushed his lips over Keith's forehead. "Do you sleep okay with other people?"

"Hmm?"

"You're tense." Lance squeezed his shoulder. "Thought it might be because you don't normally have, uh, someone else... here."

"Well, no. Except for Oliver, sometimes." Usually, when Oliver had a nightmare and would go back into hysterics if Keith so much as suggested he go back to his own bed.

"Promise I don't snore," Lance said, his smile still pressed into Keith's hair.

"Good." Keith nuzzled into Lance's chest, kissing him just above the neckline of his T-shirt. "I think I could get used to you here."

"Yeah?"

"Mm. You're nice and warm."

Lance laughed and playfully flicked him in the ear. "Oh, so you're just using me for my body heat? I see how it is, mister."

"It's a mutually beneficial body-heat situation," Keith pointed out.

Lance agreed and went back to petting his hair. "Keith," he said, after a moment, his voice soft and sleepy, "kiss me goodnight."

Keith kissed him goodnight about twelve times.

2. February

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith cancels a date, Lance is just not having that.

Keith held the phone away from his face so he didn't cough directly into the mic. "Sorry," he said, "but, uh, yeah, I gotta cancel on dinner."

"Are you okay?" Lance asked, his concern coming through the speakers.

"I mean." Keith looked around his living room. He was camped out on the couch and Oliver was curled up in a pile of blankets on the loveseat, a collection of his stuffed animals on the ground beside him, because he'd pushed them all off the couch when his fever broke and he got too hot. Their only other decorations were a collection of cold medicines on the end table, an empty tissue box on the coffee table, and another beside it that was steadily emptying as well. "Been better."

"Alright, well, I'll just come over to your place instead," he said.

"Did you miss the part where I said I've got a cold from hell?" Keith sneezed again for good measure. "I'm not good company right now."

"What? No, not for a date, I'm coming over to take care of you!" Lance sounded indignant, like the very idea that he wouldn't come over to bring Keith chicken soup or whatever was an insult to his manners. Knowing Lance, it probably was.

"No, no, Lance, I don't want you to catch it," he said. There were probably germs on every surface of the house, especially considering the fact that Oliver wasn't as good at washing his hands and not coughing on stuff as Keith was.

Lance snorted. "Babe. I got my flu shot. I'm coming over. You need anything? Ginger ale? Soup? I'll stop by the store."

"You can still catch—ugh. Okay." Keith sighed, knowing there was no way he could stop Lance now. "Actually, cough drops would be great. I ran out, but I'm not leaving the house again. Taking Oliver to the doctor was enough."

"You got it," Lance said, "I'll text you when I'm on my way, okay? Take care."

"Yeah, 'bye."

Keith dozed while he waited on Lance, but it was that kind of hazy half-sleep where he could still hear, and kind of see, but he wasn't sure whether Oliver had gotten up for a second or if he'd dreamt it. Probably a dream. Oliver was out cold, using too much of his energy recovering to stay awake for more than a couple hours at a time.

Lance showed up with cough drops. And Gatorade, and ginger ale, and this mentholated stuff that, he claimed, would decongest you in like five minutes, tops. He also snuck a box of popsicles in the freezer and a container of chicken soup from the deli down the road in the fridge.

"You're kind of a mess," he said, sitting on the end of the couch when Keith bent his legs to give him some room. Lance rested his hand on the blanket over Keith's knee—it was his comforter, dragged off his bed because the usual lap blanket that hung over the back of the couch was tucked around Oliver and Keith didn't both getting one of the spares out of the closet.

"Yeah, well. I'm worse than usual today," he said, dragging himself into a sitting position because every second he laid down, his head got even stuffier. "Think it's 'cuz I had to go hang out in a pediatrician's office for an hour."

"Did you go to the doctor?" Lance asked, and Keith shook his head.

"I know I have what he has—doctor said it was a viral thing, so it's not like I can go on antibiotics or anything. All they'd probably do is give me extra-strength Tylenol, and Tylenol in general does shit-all for me." He was self-satisfied with getting through all that without coughing, although he was

gonna have to attribute that to the cough drop he was knocking around between his teeth. Lance had brought the menthol ones and the cherry ones, because he wasn't sure what Keith liked. He was the best.

"What can I help with?" Lance asked, his voice a little softer.

"Hm?"

"I know the hardest thing about being sick and being an adult is that you still have to do like, adult stuff, but you feel like crap. So, what can I help with? I was thinking I'll get clean sheets on your bed, since yours are probably all gross if you slept through the night with a fever. Oliver's, too. Maybe get some laundry going?" He tapped his fingers against Keith's knee, thinking, and Keith was too busy trying to wrap his head around this whole... thing.

Normally, when stuff like this happened, it was just him and Oliver, maybe Colleen—she'd take Oliver to school if Keith couldn't do it himself. Keith had a formulated response by now, because it was usually the both of them catching the same thing. It was basically the following: move everything into the living room so he didn't have to go back and forth between bedrooms, set regular alarms on his phone to wake himself up to check on Oliver, and dig out his secret bag of Starbursts, which were the only reward that could convince Oliver to take cold medicine. Then, he just mentally prepared himself for the next couple days to be hell, and didn't worry about anything else except remembering to feed the cat.

"Keith, hey. You alright?"

Oh. He hadn't answered. "Yeah. Just thinking." He exhaled, mouth open because he couldn't breathe through his nose. "It's normally just me, and, you know. It sucks. I got some kind of stomach flu when he was like nine months old and it was the worst three days of my life."

"It's not just you," Lance said, an unspoken *not anymore*, on the end.

Keith would have started crying, if he wasn't busy sneezing a whole four times into the crook of his elbow. Somehow, it made him *more* congested.

He was starting to get a headache from all this. "Thanks, Lance. I... you have no idea how much this helps."

"Anytime, baby," he said, getting off the couch, pressing a kiss to Keith's sweaty forehead, running a hand through his hair. He didn't even tell Keith how greasy his hair was, or ask how long it'd been since he'd washed it, so Keith knew he must have looked extra pitiful.

Keith napped some more while Lance got a few chores done, biting down hard on the feeling of guilt that came with letting somebody else do simple household tasks for him because he couldn't do them himself. It helped that Lance was cheerful about it, like there was nothing he'd rather do.

When Keith's alarm rang like it was physically smacking into his headache, Lance reached over to silence it faster than Keith could. "What's that one for?" he asked, as Keith blinked himself awake, rubbing his sinuses, which did just about nothing.

"Alarm to wake up Oliver so I can get him to take his meds again," Keith said. "I gotta take something, too, I think my dayquil's wearing off."

"Okay, lemme get stuff," Lance said, grabbing them a glass of water each, while Keith sorted through the boxes on the end table, trying to remember which of his half-empty boxes of cold medicine had been the one that worked really well last time.

He perked up a little after he took something, and that was normally the energy he'd use to get stuff done like getting them dinner or taking out the mostly-tissue-filled trash. But Lance had the house cleaner than it'd been before either of them came down with something, and he'd poured the soup into a saucepan to heat it back up.

"You'll feel better if you get a shower," he said, "get changed out of those clothes."

Keith looked back at Oliver, who was bundled back up in his blankets, hugging his dinosaur pillow and watching cartoons.

"I got him," Lance said. "Just go get cleaned up, I'll have this done by the time you get out."

Keith obeyed, smiling and falling even harder for Lance when he found a clean set of clothes set on top of the laundry hamper in the bathroom, so that Keith didn't even have to dig through his closet. It was painfully domestic. Keith couldn't find it in him to mind.

When he left the bathroom, he found Lance standing in the kitchen, leaning over the breakfast bar to ask Oliver about the show he was watching. He leaned against Lance's side, laughing when Lance squirmed because Keith's hair was dripping on his shoulder. He was sure the food smelled great, except that his nose wasn't functioning right, and he smiled as Lance patted him on the arm.

"Feeling better?" he asked, and Keith nodded.

"Yeah. Thanks for today," he said, "it's been... a while. Since I've felt like I wasn't on my own."

"You're not," Lance said, pressing a kiss to his cheek, staying closer to him than was advisable. "I like being there for you. Plus, I don't think for a second that you wouldn't do the exact same thing for me."

"Of course. And I will, next week when you catch this thing from kissing me."

"Oh, shut up. My immune system's super intense, I hang out with a billion kid-germs all day."

He caught it, anyways, and Keith learned that when Lance wasn't feeling well, he looked so pitiful, Keith couldn't even find it in himself to say, "I told you so."

3. March

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith and Lance take Oliver to the park, and Oliver finds a new friend.

It had been raining pretty much non-stop for the past week, and Keith was starting to get tired of the March weather real fast. His backyard was basically a swamp, and he'd even been letting the cat inside more often, because he didn't think anyone deserved to be forced to walk around in that enormous puddle.

Having the Everglades out his back door also meant Oliver couldn't go play outside without making a mess (which was saying something, because Keith's tolerance for what was considered 'a mess' had taken a sharp upturn since having a kid), and so on the first day they were guaranteed dry skies, he and Lance took Oliver to the park, where, hopefully, there wasn't an inch of standing water on every surface.

The soccer field suffered the same fate as Keith's backyard, but the playground itself was relatively unscathed, except that the whole place smelled like wet mulch. Oliver didn't care, because he was too excited about monkey bars, and so he directed most of his attention toward swinging around the playground, kicking his rain-booted feet when he couldn't quite reach the next one, as if it'd help his momentum.

The park was mostly empty, except for a couple of middle schoolers who were on the swings now, because Keith had glared the misbehavior out of them when he caught them trying to graffiti the inside of the tube slide.

"I feel like we should have a labrador running around somewhere," Lance said, his arm resting on the back of the park bench behind Keith. "Just like, to complete this idyllic picture of suburban family weekend activities."

"The cat is enough for me," Keith said, patting Lance's knee.

"You don't even let her inside half the time," Lance protested.

"Exactly." Keith laid his head on Lance's shoulder, relaxing against him.

Lance leaned in to kiss his temple, leaning his head against Keith's for a second, his dreamy whisper of, "this is nice," burning hot over the shell of Keith's ear.

"You're nice," Keith countered, stealing a kiss while Oliver was occupied with poking around at something in the grass.

Lance opened his mouth like he had another snarky response, but Oliver bounded over, his hands cupped around something, yelling, "Dad! Dad, look!"

Keith half-turned with a, "yeah?"

"What'cha got there, buddy?" Lance asked, and Oliver bounced up and down a few times before announcing his find.

"A worm!"

And, yep, it was an earthworm, a giant one, probably as long as Oliver's forearm, squirming around in the dirt clumps still stuck to it. Keith recoiled a little, not because he was scared of bugs or anything, but once they got to a certain size, they were just gross. "Uh. Yeah, that's a real good worm," Keith said, frowning at it. "Really, uh. Wiggly."

"Nice!" Lance cheered, and then looked suspiciously at Keith. "Wait, are you freaked out?"

"Nope."

Yep.

"Hey, give it here," Lance said, and Oliver dropped it into his waiting palm.

"Dad, it's just a worm, you don't have to be scared of it, I put it on my hand and it didn't bite me or anything."

"I'm not—*Jesus Christ, Lance, get that out of my face.*"

Lance had the worm pinched between two fingers, dangling it inches from Keith, and it was wriggling with enough force now that Keith jerked away because there was a very real chance it could actually climb onto him. "Oh, I'm sorry, I thought you weren't scared of it," Lance said, grinning, because he was an asshole.

"I'm not," he said, louder this time, because he was talking over Oliver cackling. "Listen, I'm not scared of like, a dirty sock, either, but I don't want it in my face."

Lance just reached out further, saying, "*you sure?*" as the stupid thing actually bumped against his nose.

See, the only downside to dating Lance was that glaring at him didn't intimidate him anymore, so Keith had to go one step forward and lunge toward him with a, "give me that, you dick, I'm gonna shove it down your shirt!"

Lance screeched at an impressive register and tossed the worm back into the grass where it belonged, grappling with Keith to keep him from tackling him right off the bench. He put his arms around Keith to placate him, repeating, "sorry, sorry," as he kissed the side of his head. Keith put up a little bit of a struggle, just to annoy Lance, but he eventually calmed down, leaning against Lance's side.

Oliver climbed onto the bench next to them and poked Keith in the arm.

"Hey, Dad. Is the worm okay?"

Is the worm okay. He probably should've expected that from Oliver.

"It's a bug, it's fine," Keith said, relaxing again now that nobody was trying to touch him with an insect. The teenagers who were still loitering around the swingset were staring at them. "Geez, Lance. You're a monster."

Lance snorted and rolled his eyes. "Oh, come on, that's nothing. When I was four, my sister made me lick a worm."

Keith didn't have to ask further, because Oliver shouted, "WHAT!?" for him.

"Yeah!" Lance said, "she told me it would taste like a gummy worm and I believed her. That's what you get for being the youngest sibling, man."

"Ugh. At least she didn't make you eat it," Keith said, and Lance shuddered just thinking about it. "I'm sorry, what was that? Are you regretting touching my face with that thing?"

"Okay, it might have been kind of mean," Lance said, and he leaned over to whisper, "you'll just have to get payback."

Keith met him with a particularly sharp grin. "I will, don't worry."

4. April

Summary for the Chapter:

Lance meets the family, Pidge eats all the brownies, and Oliver joins a club.

Notes for the Chapter:

April is when my birthday is so I had to make it when Matt and Shiro get engaged ofc <3

"OH MY GOD!"

Lance screeched so loud, Keith had to crank the volume on his phone a couple notches down.

"Oh...kay," he said, "wasn't expecting that."

"Sorry, sorry," Lance said, quieter now. "I just get really excited about weddings. And engagements. All that romantic crap, y'know?"

"Of course you do," Keith said, smiling despite himself, because Lance was exactly the type of person to go over the moon when two people he didn't even know got engaged. He was even louder than Keith had been when Matt called. Thankfully, that had been during the school day, because Keith yelled *fucking finally!* He also only realized he was on speaker when he heard Shiro laughing at him. "Anyway, we're having dinner with the family Sunday night. You want to come?"

"Wait, what? Dude, I don't think meeting your parents at your brother's engagement party is really... a great idea."

"No, no." Keith passed his phone to his other ear, so he could sandwich it between his shoulder and his head while he grabbed the heavy cast-iron pan out of the sink. "It's fine, their actual engagement party is Friday night. This is just a thing we do every week, and... well. Colleen's been telling me to

invite you for like. A month." He tried to figure out exactly how he was going to get the pan into the cabinet over his head without dropping his phone and decided maybe doing dishes while answering the phone was a bad idea.

"Alright, well, in that case, I'll be there," Lance said, "text me the address, yeah? Oh! And should I bring anything?"

"Are you kidding?" Keith laughed, "the Holts are Italian, man, there'll be enough food for a few dozen extra people."

Lance brought brownies anyway. Apparently they were peanut-butter-and-Nutella-filled, and Hunk's recipe, so they were probably amazing. Pidge snatched them from him as soon as he walked over the threshold, probably because Pidge also knew how Hunk-recipes always turned out.

"I met you at Shay's party, right?" Pidge asked, preceded by no greeting aside from *oh, hey, brownies!*

"Yeah, Hunk and Shay and I've all been friends since college," Lance said, shrugging out of his denim jacket. "You work with her, right?"

"Yes," Pidge said, muffled around a bite of brownie—wow, that was fast. "Always knew there was something fishy between you two."

Keith didn't like the calculated stare or the accusing finger Pidge had pointed at them, so he walked on past, ignoring the comment, and headed out the back door instead. It was a warm evening for this early in the spring, which was good, because Oliver could wear off all his energy chasing the dog around the yard, and he wouldn't get bored listening to a bunch of adults talk about things he didn't care about.

Matt and Shiro were still basically one entity, curled up on one of the wicker couches on the patio, and Keith wasn't enough of a cynic to fault them for it. Plus, anybody who was keeping Shiro away from trying to help with dinner deserved a thank-you.

Meeting five new people—well, four, he knew Pidge already—might've been easier than going to a party in theory, but Lance's fingers still tensed around his when everyone immediately turned to look at them.

Luckily, Lance was a little smoother about this whole thing than Keith thought he'd be, probably because he was used to talking in front of crowds of way more people (all people under the age of eleven, but still). He offered his congratulations to Matt and Shiro, told Colleen and Sam there might be a few brownies left after Pidge was finished with them, and, of course, got really excited to meet their dog.

Sometimes, Keith forgot that Lance was genuinely a charming person. He always figured his own response to Lance's everything was just a result of being attracted to him, but Lance was one of those people who could just get along with anybody. Honestly, it had Keith a little jealous.

He was so busy watching Lance tell Colleen funny stories about his job that he nearly missed Pidge dropping into the chair next to him. Nearly. He wasn't sure how somebody so small could flop so hard—then again, Oliver could, too.

"Hey. Your boyfriend's pretty great," Pidge said. "I mean, I sort of already knew that, because like, I'm gonna be honest, I grilled Shay on him."

"What kind of sibling would you be if you didn't?" That came from Matt, who was still half in Shiro's lap. He was toying with the ring on the chain around his neck—it was Shiro's, and the two of them planned on actually exchanging them at their wedding. Matt still hadn't gotten used to wearing it, which meant he was fidgeting with it constantly.

It had been a while since Keith told the two of them about anyone he was seeing, because they tended to do a lot of "research" on any guy Keith was interested in. He knew they were just protective, both of Keith and Oliver, and he did appreciate that one time they found out that a guy Keith was dating had an assault misdemeanor, even if it did mean he had to have a serious conversation with them about not looking up people's criminal records.

"Seriously, I'm really happy for you, Keith," Shiro said, "he's a sweet guy."

"Who is?" Lance asked, taking a seat on Keith's other side, a lemonade in one hand (for him) and an iced tea in the other (for Keith).

"You are," Keith said, taking a sip and then setting his drink on the glass patio table in front of him, leaning back and taking Lance's hand again. His fingers were cold, probably from bringing Keith's tea over. Keith couldn't remember telling Lance he liked iced tea.

Pidge's feet were up on the table as they sunk lower and lower into the couch cushions, arms folded. "Does this mean that I'm going to have to deal with *two* gross couples at every family whatever?"

"Um, I think you're forgetting about Mom and Dad," Matt said, nudging Pidge's feet with his.

"Ugh, god, you're right. Me and Oliver are going to start a 'mouth-kissing is gross' club." Pidge sat back up and hollered across the patio. "Oliver! You wanna start a club?"

"Yeah!" Oliver cheered, pumping both fists in the air.

"It could also just be a club for people under four feet tall," Matt said, earning an eye-roll from Pidge for the well-worn argument.

"Hate to say it, but I'm pretty sure that wouldn't last long," Lance said, "he's already like an inch and a half taller than he was at the beginning of the school year."

Keith hadn't realized Lance had noticed.

He supposed he shouldn't have found himself surprised to hear Lance telling the kind of stories about Oliver that Keith normally would; the three of them spent so much time together, after all. It was more surprising that Keith's heart started racing while he listened, like Lance hanging out with his family thrilled him just as much as kissing him did.

He settled against Lance's side, arm around him, listening to him tell everyone about—oh god—that stupid thing with the worm, and thought maybe he wouldn't mind more Sunday night dinners like this one.

5. May

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith drives Oliver to kindergarten on his motorcycle for his sixth birthday, every other kid in the school is jealous.

Notes for the Chapter:

Not that much klance in this, but I just couldn't see Lance being at Oliver's bday party before anybody in the school knows about him and Keith ^^; if only because it would make Keith anxious af.

Keith made good on his promise and drove Oliver to school on his motorcycle for his birthday. He'd gotten Oliver a tiny helmet, and he drove five miles per hour under the speed limit for most of the trip, having only relented on his request that Oliver wear his roller-skating elbow and kneepads when Oliver protested that he *wasn't gonna fall off, dad*.

Keith figured that if the school was gonna say they couldn't bring in birthday treats that contained tree nuts, dairy, gluten, or anything else that was in the only cupcake recipe Keith knew, he had to do *something*. And Oliver seemed pretty pleased with it, especially when Keith revved the engine for him once in the parking lot, making half of the kids congregating around the door start screaming. Lance, who was busy ushering the mob of children through the front door, turned and waved at them.

Oliver hopped off the back of the bike, popping off the helmet to reveal a mass of curls that were even more chaotic than usual. "That was awesome!" he cheered, grinning wide enough to show off his missing tooth. "Are you gonna pick me up in it after school, too?"

Keith hadn't realized that was part of the bargain, but Oliver was clutching his helmet to his chest and giving Keith his very best puppy eyes. The ones that had convinced Keith to let Oliver keep the stray cat or stay up past bedtime to finish a movie pretty much every Friday night. "Okay, fine," he

agreed, because how was he supposed to say no? It was the kid's birthday, after all.

— — —

Keith had realized, with all his newfound experience, throwing a birthday party for a bunch of elementary-schoolers was hard. Thank god Oliver wasn't friends with anybody who had weird allergies, or Keith would've been seriously out of his depth with food options. Again.

Colleen and Shiro ended up helping him with the decorations, because Keith's aesthetic sensibilities were along the lines of "why can't I make it red and black?" for pretty much everything, and that didn't exactly theme well for a six-year-old's birthday party. In the past, Oliver's birthdays had mostly been family affairs, with the usual balloons and cake and confetti, but apparently, school-age children required themed parties. At least, that's what Keith gathered when Oliver told him that Cody S. from his class had a Spider-Man birthday party, heavily implying that he wanted the same.

And that was how Keith ended up with a cake in his house that was the shape of Spider-Man's face, which he'd purchased from a bored-looking college student at the grocery store bakery counter. It simply read "Happy Birthday!" around the perimeter, and looked like it was watching you no matter what angle you looked at it from. Oliver was in the kitchen, chin resting on the table, looking at the cake from an angle that it probably didn't seem to be watching him, because he was short enough to avoid its gaze.

"Can I eat it yet?"

"Not yet, buddy, you have to blow out the candles, and we haven't even gotten to the part where there *are* candles on there," Keith said. "You'll know when it's time to eat it, okay?"

Oliver gave him a dubious look, like he wasn't sure he'd ever get to eat a piece of Spider-Man's face, but he went back to playing volleyball with Pidge using a spare balloon, so Keith wasn't too concerned. Pidge was supposed to be helping with decorations, but had spent most of the day coming up with various competitions to involve Oliver in, which was

probably more help with the decorating process than anything Keith did. Keeping the birthday boy distracted was difficult and extremely necessary.

It became easier to keep him occupied when other kids started showing up, but the other kids also showed up with their parents, and Keith, who was still no better at talking with other elementary-school parents than he had been at the start of the school year, was still out of his depth. It was a good thing Shiro was endlessly charming and Colleen was overflowing with mom energy.

Keith's phone buzzed in his pocket, and he tugged it out to check the screen. Lance had been texting him steadily throughout the day—he wasn't coming to the party, because most people at school didn't know that he and Lance were dating, yet, and all the kids would probably freak out if one of their teachers showed up. Even if it was the cool teacher.

Hope the party's going well, Lance's message read, tell Oliver I said happy birthday!

Keith was busy smiling at his phone like an idiot when someone brushed up against his side. It was Pidge, holding a can of grape soda, nudging their glasses back into place with their knuckles.

"Is it cliché if I say he's growing up so fast?" Pidge asked.

"Probably." He responded to Lance at the same time with, *I think it's going alright...? and thanks. see you tomorrow.* He followed it up with a ridiculous series of sparkling heart emojis because Lance had been teasing him about never using emojis.

"I just can't stop remembering when you brought home this week-old tiny baby and I was like wow, what the fuck, Keith's an actual dad now," Pidge said, fixing the mom who'd glared at her for swearing with a flat stare. "Gotta be honest, I didn't think you'd be this good at it."

"I want to be offended by that, I really do," Keith said, "but I didn't think I'd be this good at it, either."

Pidge tilted the soda can to point in Oliver's direction, where he was staring wistfully at the pile of brightly-wrapped presents stacked up on the coffee table. "You think we can finally end his suffering and let him open some of those?"

"Yeah, I guess so," Keith said, "It's his birthday, after all."

6. June

Summary for the Chapter:

Lance and Keith have a date planned, and it's the kind where Oliver's spending the night at his grandparents' house, and Keith is *not* freaking out.

Notes for the Chapter:

Rating change here for a lot of discussions about sex. Actually that's what most of the chapter is.

Oliver was spending the night at Colleen and Sam's, and so far, Keith was spending the night panicking.

Oh, Oliver was fine. He loved hanging out with his grandparents, that wasn't the issue.

The issue was that Lance was coming over for drinks and, well, whatever else happened. It was that second part that had Keith white-knuckling the steering wheel as he drove back from dropping Oliver off. It had been, what, six years since Keith had, uh. Well, since anybody had spent the night at Keith's place, and Lance was definitely planning on spending the night, and Keith wasn't even sure he knew how to have sex anymore.

Okay, he knew how to, he just wasn't sure he could put that knowledge to practical application.

Despite all Keith's reservations, when Lance opened the door, he found himself a little calmer, mostly because Lance didn't treat it any differently from any other date, just rattling on about the lesson plans he was getting ready for the new school year, what Hunk and Shay did for their anniversary, things like that. There was still a hum of anxiety running through him that Keith couldn't entirely get rid of, but watching Lance move easily as he made them cocktails made him feel better.

So did the cocktails. Lance made a strong drink. Or Keith just didn't have any alcohol tolerance whatsoever these days.

"You doing okay?" Lance asked, because of course he did, he was too goddamn perceptive in the first place and over the past six months, he'd learned to read Keith like a book.

"Mostly," he said, petting Lance's knee, because Lance had his legs flung over Keith's lap. "I'm... I don't know. Anxious? That's ridiculous, though."

"How come?"

Keith tilted his glass in his hand and watched the ice cubes follow gravity. "Because, we've been dating for like six months, you'd think I'd get over the nerves by now."

"No, that's not what I meant," Lance said, giving him a little smile that seemed concerned, but gentle all the same. "Not why is it ridiculous, why are you anxious?"

He set the glass on the end table to keep himself from fidgeting with it. "Because... I mean, this is what I think it is, right? The two of us, alone, all night? I, uh. That's not really. That doesn't really happen to me a lot."

"Buddy, I hope you don't think I'm getting a ton," Lance replied. He set his own glass on the coffee table, fumbling around for a coaster.

"I didn't think—okay, well, I didn't really think about your, uh. Sex life. At all." More like he tried not to. Mostly because of that part of him that repeatedly said, *Keith, you're too old to be fantasizing about sleeping with a guy*. But he was dating Lance, which meant he was pretty much constantly on the end of Lance's flirting, which had taken a turn for the risqué lately. So maybe a few errant daydreams were to be expected.

Lance hummed, taking Keith's hand, sitting up so that he could kiss Keith's palm. "You're so polite about this," he said.

"Sorry," Keith said, "if the motorcycle and the leather jacket and the long hair were making you expect a bad boy, you should've called up Keith from six years ago."

"Yeah, well," Lance kissed Keith's hand again, at the join of his thumb and palm, "Lance from six years ago was a douchey college boy, so you probably wouldn't be into him." His lips found the pulse in Keith's wrist, and he must've reserved his comments on how fast it was racing. "I like that you're polite about it, anyway. You're sweet."

"It's just because I don't know how to flirt, but that's very generous of you."

Lance giggled and sat up, seated entirely on Keith's lap, now, and kissed him, tipsy and clumsy about it. Something about it reminded Keith of their first. Maybe the fact that he was kind of drunk. Maybe it was how quickly he'd become breathless, because Lance's douchey college boy years had clearly done something for him. He knew how to kiss. Keith was quickly overwhelmed; he'd forgotten how this felt and now that he had a man in his arms again, he was swept up in how fucking *good* it was.

It wasn't that Lance was usually chaste with him, no, you couldn't exactly call it that, but now, he was filthy, his mouth open against Keith's, legs spread to straddle his lap, hands on his chest. Keith wasn't entirely sure he was keeping up. And he needed to figure it out quick, because Lance wanted this, and Keith was inclined to give it to him. That is, if he could get his heart to stop hammering at that distracting volume.

Lance rolled his hips against Keith's and he shook, panic bubbling up inside him in a way that felt situationally wrong, but Keith couldn't rid himself of it. He gripped Lance's biceps, letting Lance kiss him back into the couch until he completely spiraled, his brain taking straight to all his familiar, well-worn worries. This was gonna be a disaster.

"Lance," he said, his voice so tight it almost had him looking for a hand squeezing his throat. "I think you should slow down."

Lance blinked at him, and he looked so beautiful Keith almost pulled him in again, color high in his cheeks, lips red and still wet. "Are you okay?" he

asked, for the second time that night.

"I don't know," Keith said, more honest this time. Lance's mouth pressed into a thin line and he ran a hand down Keith's cheek. When Keith leaned into it, some of the tension drained out of him. Lance looked significantly relieved, too, and he continued to touch Keith gently, tucking his hair behind his ear, smoothing a thumb over the shape of his jaw. "It's not that I don't want to," he said, "I just get so... I panic, every time."

"What's making you so nervous?" Lance asked. He was still on Keith's lap, but the closeness was more out of need to be in each other's space than anything.

Keith thought for a moment, closing his eyes. Lance squeezed his shoulder, massaging him gently through his thin T-shirt. "I'm afraid that it'll be terrible. And that if it's terrible, you'll... you'd feel like you're just putting up with me."

"Goddamn, Keith," Lance said, "those are some heavy expectations to put on a first time."

Keith laughed, and it came out bitter. "I know. I'm overthinking just about everything I can."

"You are doing that, a little bit, I think," Lance said. He shifted until he was sitting sideways on Keith's lap, head on Keith's shoulder, close in the companionable sort of way Keith was used to Lance being. "Listen, babe. We don't have to do it just because we have a night to ourselves. We'll have plenty of nights to ourselves. And I'd be perfectly fine spending this one making another drink and watching some dumb movie before going to sleep together."

"Yeah," Keith said, trying to stamp down hard on whatever was making tears prick at his eyes. He wasn't upset, not really. He was just... "I just want everything to be perfect, because—because it has to be. For you. That's what you deserve."

"I adore you," Lance said, easy, like he was telling Keith it was dark outside, "but Keith, nothing's ever perfect. It's more interesting that way."

"That sounds like something you stick on a Hallmark card," Keith said, quietly listening to the echo of Lance's *I adore you* replaying in his head. "Or maybe a motivational poster."

"Well, it's true! I mean, shit, look at how we met. That was dumb as hell." Lance took his hand again, thumb stroking over his knuckles. "Worked out pretty well, I think."

Keith pulled Lance closer, until he was clinging to him a little bit, which he would've been embarrassed about if Lance didn't seem perfectly happy snuggling into him. "Why does this have to be such a big deal?"

"Intimacy, I guess? I dunno," Lance said, "but this is perfectly good, too. Not that I wouldn't mind—well. I can be patient."

"Can you?"

"For you, yeah." It was, like most things Lance said, almost painfully honest, and punctuated with a kiss, and Keith relaxed into him so completely he woke up a few hours later with a crick in his neck, Lance still snoring quietly on his shoulder.

He nudged Lance awake and the two of them retreated to Keith's bedroom, just to fall asleep together, curling up in a way that Keith was steadily getting used to. He wouldn't mind if this happened every night.

7. July

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith needs some serious help planning something for Lance's birthday. Thank god for Hunk, honestly.

"What should I get Lance for his birthday?" Keith asked, scrolling through texts to see whether he'd dropped any hints and coming up empty-handed.

"Uhh, something cool! A spaceship!"

Keith regretted posing that question to Oliver. Should've guessed he'd get an answer like this.

"Where would I get a spaceship?"

Oliver paused on the picture he was coloring to think for a moment, then just shrugged. "I dunno. The spaceship store?"

"I don't think our neighborhood has one of those," Keith said, and Oliver went back to his picture, which looked like a spaceship, and was probably the origin of his weird gift suggestions.

Keith seriously needed some outside help on this. He thought about texting Colleen, but she'd probably suggest flowers or something—not that flowers would be a bad idea, but Keith had just gotten him a ridiculously huge bouquet for their six-month anniversary. He could've just done the normal-ass thing and asked Lance what he wanted, but Lance *loved* surprises, so Keith didn't want to give him any hints.

So, he went for what he should've done in the first place—he texted Hunk.

Hunk had the brilliant idea of taking Lance to the county fair, because apparently he'd gone to the one in his hometown every year and was always talking about it. And Hunk's advice worked, because Lance lit up brilliantly

as soon as Keith asked him, pulled him straight into a kiss and told him he'd love to.

Keith didn't know how in over his head he was gonna be.

He'd never been to the county fair, because that just wasn't Keith's thing, but he'd always assumed it was a small affair, a couple booths and stuff like that. He wasn't expecting a sprawl the size of an amusement park and the biggest ferris wheel he'd ever seen in his life. Oliver, who was sitting on Keith's shoulders, pointed at it with a dramatic gasp and a quiet whisper of *I wanna go on there*.

"I hope he's tall enough," Keith muttered, and Lance laughed.

"I dunno, Keith, you might not be either."

"We are literally the same height."

Keith figured the ferris wheel was gonna have to wait, because there were a dozen things the three of them could distract themselves with on the way. Lance had to stop and prove how good he was at the carnival games, which Keith had always thought were rigged to be impossible to win.

Thank god that was true for the ring toss one, because he really didn't want Oliver to win a goldfish.

The one where you had to shoot little targets with a pellet gun either wasn't rigged or Lance was just very good, because he got a win on the first try, and that was how Oliver ended up with a plush dinosaur that he immediately hugged to his chest and refused to let anybody else hold onto.

Then, Oliver saw a pony, and so they were dragged in the direction of what looked like a wide, low barn with open sides, and what turned out to be full of stalls with live animals, which made Keith pause. Because there was a pig that looked to be about the size of his living room sofa directly in front of him.

"Come on, Keith," Lance said, taking his hand, his other holding Oliver's free hand to make sure he didn't go running off toward something he thought was cute.

Keith took a deep breath—and it smelled like manure, which was to be expected, he supposed—and followed them.

Lance navigated the space easily even without having been to these particular fairgrounds before, like he knew how this kind of thing was run. He led them with a purpose, shuffling Oliver in between the two of them to keep him from getting lost in the crowd of people. And then Keith realized where Lance was leading them, and he also realized he was gonna have to remain very firm on his *no more pets* policy.

Because they were standing in front of rows and rows of small metal crates, the majority of them occupied by adorable, fluffy bunnies. There were some empty ones, assumedly because somebody's kids had coerced them into taking one home. Oliver already had his fingers stuffed between the bars on the nearest one, trying his best to pet the occupant, who was fast asleep just out of reach of prodding six-year-old fingers.

"Oh my god," Keith sighed, and Lance looked at him like he was trying to figure out what Keith's deal was. "We are not going home with a bunny."

"Oh, just let him look at them," Lance said. Oliver had moved on to another bunny that was awake and wiggling its little nose in his direction. Lance put an arm around Keith, and even though it was sweltering in the barn, Keith leaned in. "This takes me back," he said, watching Oliver talk to the rabbit.

"Did you take bunnies to the fair when you were a kid?" Keith asked, and Lance shook his head.

"Nah. I had a cow."

"What?"

"Oh, I was a bona fide country boy, Keith," Lance said. "My uncle had a dairy farm, and I had a cow—Kaltenecker."

"What kind of a name is that?" Keith teased, elbowing Lance in the side.

"An awesome one." Lance leaned over and kissed his cheek, then his jaw, once, twice, enough times that the older couple who seemed to be running the bunny operation started eyeing them suspiciously. Keith didn't know why, so he just raised an eyebrow at them as Lance continued to lean against him, one hand in Keith's back pocket.

(Lance had stayed the night again after the first... debacle. It'd gone much better.)

Oliver was easily plied from the bunnies with the offer of food, and Keith soon learned that fair food options were all either fried or entirely made of sugar. Or turkey legs. Which might've been fried. He also learned that Oliver *would* eat cauliflower if it was deep-fried, and wasn't sure if that was an improvement on Oliver's normal diet. Probably not.

But that's how Keith ended up sitting on a bench at a picnic table, facing outward in the direction opposite the sun, because he hadn't remembered sunglasses. Lance and Oliver were sharing an enormous cloud of cotton candy, which meant Oliver was leaving bite marks on one side of it and turning the lower half of his face blue, and Lance was plucking pieces off the other side and licking the melted sugar off his fingertips after he ate them. Keith was trying hard not to watch.

"Want some?"

Keith had been so focused on watching the ferris wheel turn, he didn't notice Lance's hand reaching out, offering him a little tuft of unnaturally blue cotton candy. He didn't. He'd never had much of a sweet tooth, but Lance was holding it up to his face like if Keith wanted to eat it right out of his fingers, he could. Actually, that'd be the most economical way to do it.

And it was driving Keith absolutely crazy.

The only thing he could say for himself was that he didn't actually touch Lance's fingers with his mouth as he ate it, but he still shifted uncomfortably in his seat as Lance licked his fingers clean again. The sugar

dissolved in Keith's mouth and left the backs of his teeth feeling fuzzy, but he didn't really mind.

Lance took a picture of Oliver with blue candy coloring smeared across his face from ear to ear before he let Keith get to him with a wet paper towel.

"Good thing we didn't get you the red," Keith said, "or you'd look like you walked out of a horror movie."

"Maybe I just ate somebody blue," Oliver suggested, which was sort of disturbing.

"Don't eat anybody," he said, just in case.

Oliver finally pulled them in the direction of the ferris wheel, back to his original goal. Turns out you didn't have to be very tall to ride it, which made sense, because it just went in slow circles.

The benches were wide enough that Keith and Lance could sit with Oliver between them. Even though Keith pulled the lap bar down as far as it could go and it locked into place just fine, he put an arm around Oliver's shoulders, worried he'd find some way to wiggle out of the seat while it was moving. Lance rested his arm over Keith's, his hand coming to rest at the corner of Keith's jaw, thumb running over a little patch of stubble Keith had missed while he was shaving that morning.

"Happy birthday," Keith said, tilting his face into the touch so he could kiss Lance's palm.

"I wanna make this thing rock back and forth and stuff!" Oliver announced, and Lance laughed.

"Yeah, okay," he said, in the kind of way that made Keith's heart drop even though they were already on the descend and close to the bottom, "hold on tight."

8. August

Summary for the Chapter:

Everyone's going back to school, and it's both easier and harder than it was last year.

Notes for the Chapter:

I'm gonna assume that in this universe, everybody's just as chill about a male teacher dating one of his students' dads as they'd be if it was a student's mom. So, it's a little weird but nobody's an asshole about it.

Keith hated being out shopping when it was like this. It was crowded enough that he made Oliver hold his hand, even though they were inside and Oliver insisted he could walk around by himself, *dad*. But Keith didn't trust Oliver not to get lost in a Target, because there were a lot of brightly colored, exciting things that could easily distract him.

They were shopping for school supplies.

Last year, the stress had been entirely different, mostly due to Keith not knowing what he was doing. Last year, he'd also gone extremely early, out of fear that this exact thing would happen.

But it was only a couple weeks before school started, and Oliver apparently couldn't just use his crayons and markers from last year, so out they went, along with Lance, who was always down for a sale on a ludicrous amount of markers.

So far, they'd run into three parents of children from Oliver's school who recognized Lance and struck up a conversation with him. Keith and Lance had decided, long before the school year approached, that they weren't planning on hiding their relationship, but they weren't announcing anything, either. It meant life continued mostly as normal, but it also meant sometimes the mom of a third grader looked at him a little funny, because

he was walking around Target with one hand in Oliver's and his other arm around Lance.

It wasn't like he was gonna let go, though. Lance made him feel a bit more comfortable, which was saying something for this atmosphere, which would've had Keith tense beyond belief if he was pushing past people into aisles with just Oliver, who was trying his best to disappear off to the superhero backpacks.

"I think I might be the only thing people are gossiping about when the school year starts," Lance said, sounding a little impressed with himself.

"Sorry," Keith said, patting the small of his back and trying to put some distance between the two of them. It only served to make Lance throw his arm around Keith's shoulders and pull him in closer.

"Nah," he said, "you wouldn't *believe* how much easier this is than having every single mom in the school trying to date me—and I'm not being big-headed, I *know* it's just 'cuz I'm like, the only young-ish male teacher who's not married already."

"I think there's plenty of other reasons, but go on," Keith said. They reached the wall full of backpacks and he released Oliver's hand to let him go find one.

"I'm just saying, I'd rather have everybody talking about me and my new boyfriend than... that."

"Have we finally found something that makes you uncomfortable?" Keith teased, patting Lance's back as he leaned his face into Keith's and grumbled about it.

Keith unfolded Oliver's crumpled school supply list from his pocket, going over for the fifth time what they were supposed to be getting. How the hell could it possibly be a whole page's worth of stuff? Keith swore it'd been shorter last year, and hoped desperately it wouldn't increase in length with grade level, or he'd be very afraid to know what a high school supply list looked like.

Oliver bounced back over with a Spider-Man backpack, so it looked like that obsession was still going strong. He reached up to drop it into the cart, and Keith picked it up, looking it over. "That one looks pretty good," he said, and Oliver hopped up and down a little bit with excitement, his curls bobbing with him. He flung himself onto the back end of the cart, feet resting on the bottom of it and hands clinging to the sides. Keith automatically put a foot on the other side of the cart to keep it from tipping forward in Oliver's direction. Honestly, he'd been expecting this to happen sooner.

"I just saw Kaylee from kindergarten last year," Oliver announced, and Keith remembered that this was the Kaylee with an "ee" not the one with an "eigh." He resolved himself to only ever name his kids things that could have one spelling.

"Yeah? Is she excited about first grade, too?"

Oliver had been bouncing off the walls all summer, and Keith couldn't ever remember being that excited to go back to school. "Yeah! I think. I didn't ask."

Lance, who was scrolling through the list he'd noted on his phone and added to every few seconds when he remembered something else he needed to buy, laughed under his breath.

"Anyway," Oliver continued, "she wanted to know why I was hanging out with Mr. McClain, and then I thought, Lance, do I have to call you Mr. McClain when I'm in school? 'Cuz I don't, like, ever, most of the time."

Keith and Lance looked at each other, wide-eyed because they hadn't thought about that.

"Uh. Probably you should," Keith said, "since he's your teacher."

Oliver considered for a moment. "Yeah, but I wouldn't call you 'Mr... whatever,' I'd just call you 'dad,' even if you were my teacher."

Keith didn't even know where to start with that. *Lance isn't your dad* probably wasn't a great place, because Oliver had accidentally called Lance 'dad' a couple weeks back when he was half-asleep, and Lance happy-cried about it for like an hour afterward. "You know what our last name is," he decided, instead.

"Right, but I still wouldn't call you that."

"Okay, well," Lance said, thinking for a moment, "what'll you say if somebody asks you why you call me 'Lance'?"

Oliver dropped one foot to the floor to kick the cart closer to the two of them, but Keith grabbed the handle before impact. "I'd say it's 'cuz you hang out at my house all the time."

Of course he'd answer something like that. "Sure, that won't make people ask any more questions," Keith said, quietly enough that Oliver couldn't hear him, because he didn't totally understand sarcasm yet.

"Alright, well, hm. Maybe it's like... a secret identity, then. When we're at your house, you can call me Lance, but at school it's Mr. McClain, okay?"

Oliver considered it for a moment, then nodded. "Yeah, that's cool," he said, "can I have a secret identity, too?"

"What's your secret identity gonna be?" Keith asked.

"I'll be... hmm. I'll be Peter Parker!" he said, finally hopping off the cart so Keith could continue his path through the store.

"Don't all the other kids in your class know Peter Parker is Spider-Man, though?" Keith couldn't remember if they still had a bunch of wide-ruled notebook paper from last year, so he picked up a couple of cellophane-wrapped packs of it.

Oliver paused in trying to sneak a package of highlighters he didn't need into the cart. "Oh. Yeah. Dang."

"It's alright, buddy, we'll think of one," Lance said, ruffling his hair as Keith put the highlighters back on the shelf. Oliver wandered off ahead of them again, but they were in a less crowded aisle, and Keith knew he was going to stop to look at the patterned notebook covers, anyway. Lance put his arm back around Keith. "It's gonna be a weird school year," he said, like he hadn't quite considered it before.

"Bad weird?" Keith asked, and Lance shook his head.

"Nah. Just gonna take some getting used to, that's for sure." Lance kissed the side of his head. "I still like this better."

9. September

Summary for the Chapter:

Oliver plays peewee soccer, and it might turn Keith into a stereotypical soccer mom.

Notes for the Chapter:

Sorry this one was so long in coming! My laptop died a week ago, and now I finally have a new shiny one that works! So I'm back on schedule :D

Keith was hauling a cooler full of juice boxes and quartered oranges out of the trunk of his car and hollering over his shoulder to remind Oliver to put his cleats on before he got out on the field, and Lance was laughing his ass off.

"You're such a soccer mom!"

"That's just categorically untrue," Keith said, nudging Lance out of the way of the trunk swinging shut with a hand on the middle of his chest. "I'm a soccer *dad*, by definition."

He'd enrolled Oliver in the neighborhood soccer league because his friend from down the street was in it too, and Oliver had gotten *really* into it. So into it that Keith had been forced to enact a "no soccer ball in the house" rule after Oliver kicked it into a lamp.

"Okay, but you've got your ponytail sticking out of the back of your baseball cap, a team T-shirt on, and you brought the after-the-game snack in your Honda, so like, by *definition*, you're the world's most stereotypical soccer mom," Lance said, "you're just missing the blonde highlights and, you're, you know, not a woman."

In response, Keith pulled the baseball cap off his head and deposited it on Lance's instead, purposefully yanking it down so the brim was just low

enough to block his line of sight for a second. He wasn't gonna need it, anyway, now that clouds had covered the sun. "Be nice to me, or I won't let you steal any cookies."

"Does it help if I think you're the cutest soccer mom ever?" Lance asked, the hand he'd placed at the small of Keith's back sneaking around to squeeze his hip.

"It might help a little," Keith said, watching the kids run across the field as Lance set up the folding camp chairs they'd brought with them to watch the game. It was easy to pick out Oliver among the group, his head of curls immediately identifying him. Oliver's hair was getting long, long enough that somebody had asked Keith if he was gonna make him get it cut, which had earned her a long, confused stare, because Keith's hair was about four times the length of Oliver's.

The parents in the neighborhood league didn't really know Keith and Lance before the season started—most of their kids went to the other elementary school, because their half of the neighborhood was just over the dividing line for who went where. Keith thought it was kind of nice, because everyone had suddenly become ten times nosier when they knew he was dating Lance. He got all kinds of questions from the other parents when he was just trying to pick Oliver up from school in peace—things like *how long has this been going on*, *are you two serious*, and once, memorably, *does he stay the night*? The answer to that one had been a long moment of stammering and then a quiet, *uh, yeah, he does sometimes*.

It was nice to reach across the gap between their chairs and hold Lance's hand without somebody who'd known them for a couple years at most becoming increasingly interested in their relationship.

The kids weren't great at soccer, not yet, really, so most of the game was just them running back and forth across the field, and occasionally somebody tripping head over heels over a soccer ball. Keith, because he was required to think so, thought Oliver was the best on the team, but he may have just been the fastest.

Keith wasn't the kind of parent who shouted at the team or the refs or whatever while his kid was playing; he'd determined he'd reserve that for when Oliver was in middle school sports, at the earliest. Lance was loud enough for both of them, but it was all excited cheering, applauding both teams equally, because Lance was all about fairness.

He might've cheered for Oliver's team a little more enthusiastically, though.

"Did you ever play any sports in school?" Lance asked him as the game dragged on and somebody missed a goal again.

"Nope," Keith said, "well, that's not true. I got put on this baseball league when I was in maybe fifth grade, and then I got mad at one of the coaches and chucked a baseball in his face. Think I broke something."

Lance took another bite of the cookie he'd snuck. "You get kicked off the team?"

"Yeah, I did." Keith laughed a little. "Shame. I had a pretty good fastball. Didn't you play soccer?"

"I didn't actually play any school sports," Lance said, taking a drink of water, capping the bottle, and then passing it to Keith. "But I played soccer with my siblings and a bunch of neighborhood kids sometimes." He must've learned some tricks from them, then, because he'd been teaching Oliver a few things. Granted, it didn't take much to be better at footwork than a six-year-old. But it was cute, watching the two of them pass the ball back and forth, Oliver running after it when he kicked it too hard and it flew past Lance. It was all painfully domestic, and Keith loved it.

The cluster of kids barrelled down the field opposite the direction they'd been going, but it was impossible to tell which of them had the ball, until somebody punted it directly at the goal with the kind of force that made the kid who'd gotten stuck standing there as the goalie duck out of the way instead of actually trying to block it. Yeah, that one was definitely his kid.

Lance was out of his seat cheering again, and Oliver waved at them from the field, before going back to the game with a serious look on his face,

pushing his hair out of his eyes. Maybe Keith should teach him how to put it in a ponytail.

Lance dropped back into his chair with a whole lot of, "did you *see* that? He's getting so good!" He looked excited beyond belief, which was how Lance responded to most things, but especially things involving Oliver or his nieces and nephews. It was adorable, and endearing, and Keith would watch Lance get excited like that for the rest of his life if he could, and—

"I love you," he said, because the words had been turning over in his head for some time.

Lance looked almost startled, which was understandable, because much as Keith had thought it, he'd never said it out loud. Lance took his hand again, his palm warm and rough in Keith's, and pulled it close to his chest, the look on his eyes saying he was doing it in lieu of jumping straight onto Keith's lap and kissing the daylights out of him. "I love you, too," he said, and Keith realized he hadn't been waiting on the edge of his seat for Lance to say it back. He'd just already kind of known it.

He couldn't get another word in before the clock ran out (Keith swore these games only lasted as long as the coaches wanted them to) and he was tackled by Oliver, who somehow still hadn't run out of energy.

He glanced over the top of Oliver's head, only half-registering the, "Dad! Dad! We won!" He focused instead on Lance's face, because he was still smiling, looking almost wistful.

"You guys ready for snacks?" Keith said to the part of the crowd that was a couple heads shorter than him, and they all flocked to the coolers instead, leaving Lance to wrap Keith up in his arms for a second.

"Love you," Lance said again, muffled this time, and Keith could hear the commotion around them, nobody else aware of the emotional moment going on next to them.

"This might not have been the best timing," Keith said, stepping back, because he'd already been hugging Lance for way longer than was normal,

even if you were a couple.

"It's okay," Lance said, still beaming, "now you can tell me anytime you want to."

10. October

Summary for the Chapter:

An impromptu family camping trip leads to some struggles with tent construction, and then some general cuteness.

Notes for the Chapter:

I couldn't think of what to write for October for the LONGEST time, cuz my first thought was always halloween and I had a whole arc about halloween in the first two installments of the fic, but then, out of nowhere, I thought hey, you know what would be really freakin adorable?

Camping.

And people annoying Keith while he's trying to sleep while camping.

It was unseasonably warm one weekend, and Keith had never really been the type for spontaneous overnight trips, but Lance wanted to go camping, and Keith was weak for him, so they packed a bunch of supplies into Lance's car and drove out to the campground Keith used to go hiking past in college.

A family camping trip sounded idyllic in theory, but it actually took them almost two hours to get the tent set up, and another hour to make dinner, and by the time they moved on to marshmallows, Keith was dead tired, nearly drifting off to sleep against Lance's shoulder while he held the marshmallow roasting stick still for Oliver, who'd wave it around wildly without outside assistance.

"Doing alright?" Lance asked him, looking bright and cheerful like he hadn't also just spent the last three hours fighting a losing battle with some tent poles and then some firewood.

"I'm. Hm. I'm just tired," Keith said, leaning his head back to look at the swatch of starry sky visible between the treetops.

"See any constellations?" Lance asked him, and Keith just shook his head.

"I can't recognize that many anymore," he said, wondering where that knowledge had gone. "I used to know a ton as a kid."

"There's a lot more stars here than there are at home," Oliver observed, his attention drifting from his marshmallow. Lance tightened his grip to keep Oliver's hand steady.

"Pull that guy out of the fire, kiddo," Lance said, and Keith had to remove his head from Lance's shoulder for long enough for him to help Oliver construct a s'more. As soon as Oliver was happily snacking away and getting melted marshmallow all over his face, Keith rested against Lance again, taking one of his hands. Lance's fingers were thinner than his, and they automatically moved to wind between Keith's, the contrast of their skin tones visible even in the firelight.

Oliver finished his s'more and subsequently finished scrubbing the marshmallow off his fingers and cheeks, tossing the wet paper towel he'd been using to clean himself off onto the embers of the fire as Keith banked it for the night.

"Oh. I thought that would do somethin'," Oliver said, as it failed to do much more than create smoke.

"We'll do another campfire tomorrow, and you can throw stuff in that one," Keith said, and Oliver seemed placated enough to run into the tent and change into his pajamas. Keith investigated the spot where the fire used to be, checking for any embers that might still be lit, and jumping almost a foot in the air when Lance poked him in the small of his back.

"I think you're good, babe," he said, "smokey the bear's got no complaints at this point. C'mon, I did that thing where I took two sleeping bags and zipped them together and made a double-sleeping-bag."

Keith laughed and rolled his eyes, but took his attention away from the fire, following Lance as he crouched through the small arched door of the tent, kicking his shoes off as soon as he got inside. Lance, true to his word, had inflated their full-size air mattress and had a conglomeration of sleeping bags on it. Oliver had his own little cot lying to the side of theirs, with his jungle-print sleeping bag on it, but he wasn't sleeping there. Instead, he was smack in the middle of Keith and Lance's bed, holding his stuffed giraffe and trying to look very much like he was already asleep. Keith knew it hadn't been long enough for him to have actually fallen asleep, and that Oliver was probably hoping they'd leave him be, like when he faked falling asleep in the car so Keith would carry him inside.

"Aw," Lance said, "I almost wanna just leave him there."

"You asleep, bud?" Keith asked, taking a seat on the air mattress, making the whole thing shift a little.

Oliver didn't respond, but he was grinning and trying to hide it behind his hand.

"Oh, you're definitely awake," Lance said, plopping down onto the bed next to them, hard enough to bounce Oliver up a little bit. He was laughing at this point, smushing his face into one of Keith's pillows to smother the noise. "I think he's awake, Keith."

Lance reached out to prod Oliver in the sides, tickling him until Oliver squirmed, breaking into uncontrollable, loud laughter he couldn't pretend to hide anymore. Lance kept at it until Oliver was screeching and red-faced and tossed his giraffe in their direction, where it bopped into Lance's nose and fell harmlessly down.

"Daaaad, oh my god, I was *sleeping*," Oliver said, doing no better job pretending to be annoyed with them than he did at pretending to sleep. Keith realized he had no idea which of them Oliver was talking to.

"No you weren't," Lance said, pressing the giraffe back into Oliver's hands, "you were being sneaky." He ruffled Oliver's hair good-naturedly and

Oliver scooted off to his own bed, zipping himself into his tiny sleeping bag.

"We're actually going to sleep now," Keith said, in case either of them missed that memo. He wouldn't put it past them.

"Okay," Oliver said, "goodnight, Dad." He didn't continue with a *goodnight, Lance*, so apparently "dad" was plural now. It worked in Oliver's favor, since they answered in unison anyways.

They'd been falling asleep for a few minutes (following the span of time where Lance had to kiss Keith's face eight thousand times or whatever), when Keith felt something disturb the corner of his sleeping bag. He assumed Oliver had just rolled over and bumped into their mattress, but it lifted up again, very purposefully, as slow as could be.

Keith remained still, waiting to figure out exactly what Oliver was doing—turned out, he was very slowly climbing into bed with the two of them. Keith tried to stifle his laughter, and thought he did a little better at it than Oliver had. Of course Oliver wanted to be where everybody else was.

Oliver zipped the sleeping bag up slow enough that it barely made a sound, and Keith just moved over, scooting closer to Lance to make enough room for the three of them. Lance muttered something incomprehensible and reached over to pat Oliver on the head again, and outside, a light rain pattered down onto the tent.

Keith wasn't sure if it was the rain, the crickets singing outside, or the warmth of his two favorite people falling asleep on either side of him that made him pass out so quickly. If questioned, though, he was gonna blame it on being tired as hell.

11. November

Summary for the Chapter:

Lance, Keith, and Oliver fly to see Lance's family for Thanksgiving.

Notes for the Chapter:

Sorry that this one is late again! I've been sick, but I'm doing better now so hopefully I can keep up with my weekly schedule for one more week!

Keith had never been a morning person. Not even five years of having a kid who woke up before seven on a good day had changed that, so waking up at quarter to five to drive to the airport was putting him near record levels of grumpiness. Thank god Lance had made his way to Starbucks as soon as they found their gate, with orders from Keith to get, "I don't know, something with a lot of espresso."

Oliver seemed fine with the early start to the day, and was running back and forth in front of the couple of chairs where Keith and Lance had parked their bags, his toy airplane raised over his head, making sound effects that Keith had to keep repeatedly reminding him to keep at a tolerable volume, for the sake of everybody else waiting to board.

There was an older couple sitting across from them, smiling indulgently at Oliver as he flew his toy plane around the gate, and Keith was glad the kid was so goddamn charming or somebody would've yelled at him by now.

By the time Lance returned with a paper coffee cup in each hand, Keith had gotten Oliver to gently land his plane and take a seat next to him, and Oliver was quietly coloring in the little sketchpad they got him for the trip as the gate started to fill up with people. Lance inspected the cups before handing Keith the one that had a double shot, no cream and sugar. Keith was used to it, and the bitter coffee went down smooth with the kind of reassurance that he'd have something to stave off his exhaustion for the length of time it took to board the plane and settle in.

Lance pulled a chocolate chip cookie out of the brown paper bag he'd been holding and broke it in half, letting Oliver take the bigger one. Keith didn't know how they could eat something so sweet this early in the morning—then again, Lance's coffee was probably just as saccharine.

"Who are we even going to see, again?" Oliver asked, confused because they usually spent Thanksgiving with the Holts.

"We're seeing my mom and dad," Lance explained, "and my brothers and sisters."

Oliver's nose wrinkled. "How many of those do you *have*?" he asked, probably because Lance mentioned his sister Veronica most often of any of his siblings. Oliver often forgot there were brothers involved, too.

"Well, hm. I have a pretty big family," Lance said. Oliver let him borrow his sketchbook and he flipped to a new page, drawing quick little cartoonish versions of a woman with curly hair and a man with a large mustache. "So, this is my mom and dad." He continued to draw, not seeming to mind Oliver leaning into his space to watch closely. "My brothers, Marco and Luis—and this is Luis's wife, Lisa, and they have two kids..."

Keith continued to drink his coffee, only half-listening as Lance explained his family tree to Oliver, who watched on with rapt attention, pausing to ask a few questions but mostly quiet. He was startled back into listening to Lance's explanation when he got to the bottom of the page and drew a little caricature of himself, with, "then I'm the youngest, and here's Keith, because he's my boyfriend—"

"My eyebrows are not that big."

Lance retaliated by making them bigger. "Aaand, finally, there's you! Because Keith's your dad, so you're right there."

Oliver laughed, delighted at Lance's drawing of him, and took the sketchbook back, studying the pictures of everyone. Then, he turned the page and started drawing an airplane, with Keith and Lance in the cockpit, because in Oliver's opinion, they'd make great pilots.

— — —

Keith had been anticipating some stress upon meeting Lance's family. It was a lot of people in one place, and they all seemed to know more about him than he did about them—a result of Lance telling his siblings basically everything, and of Keith never being able to keep up when Lance talked about his family. Oliver seemed to be having a good time, though, running around with Lance's niece and nephew in the backyard. Keith was sitting out on the back patio watching them when Lance's sister, Veronica, dropped into the chair next to his.

"They seem like they're having fun," she said, looking out at the kids chasing around the yard in what seemed to be a never-ending game of tag.

"Yeah, I'm glad he gets along with them."

"Me too." Veronica folded her arms and looked at him like she was expecting him to say something, or like she was trying to think what to say to him next.

"So," Keith said, "are you here to give me the shovel talk?"

She laughed. "No. I told Lance I wouldn't." Part of him felt like that was the only reason nobody had.

"Well, I appreciate that," Keith said, though he was sure he should have been thanking Lance, who was probably the one who implored his family not to try to intimidate Keith.

"I was going to do it anyway," Veronica admitted, "but, I like you." She paused, or maybe he was supposed to respond. Regardless, she went on. "Lance has been through a lot, you know."

"Yeah, I know," Keith said. Despite what Veronica claimed, this was still sounding very much like an *if you hurt him like his ex did I'll kick your ass* kind of talk.

“I’m just saying, it’s nice to see him with somebody who actually cares about him.”

...Or maybe it wasn’t that kind of talk at all. “I can’t imagine anybody not caring about him,” Keith said, because Lance was charming almost to a fault. Almost.

“Of course you can’t,” she said, “you’re crazy about the guy.”

The guy in question decided to show up about then, saving Keith from the conversation, as he tended to (especially this week). Lance ignored the several open patio chairs and decided to share Keith’s instead.

“Veronica, you better not be grilling my boyfriend,” Lance said, “you know I’ll tell you all the embarrassing relationship stories if you want, anyway.”

“I don’t want those,” Veronica said, her nose wrinkling. “I have enough embarrassing relationship stories from you in high school.”

“Oh, I wanna hear those ones,” Keith said, and Lance, despairing, sagged against his shoulder.

“Oh my god, no. You do not need to hear about high school Lance. High school Lance thought cheesy pick-up lines were romantic.”

“I’m pretty sure I remember present-day Lance doing the same thing,” Keith said, affectionately squeezing Lance’s knee.

“Shh,” Lance whispered, “*it was one time.*”

Veronica laughed, and as she got up to head back inside, she leaned over and ruffled Lance’s hair, then Keith’s. Keith was pretty sure nobody had done that since he was a teenager, but Lance halfheartedly shoved at her hand like this was an everyday thing for them.

“I like him,” she told Lance, like Keith wasn’t sitting right there and mostly underneath of him. “You did good, kid.”

Lance leaned back into Keith. “I did, didn’t I?”

12. December

Summary for the Chapter:

Lance plans something for his and Keith's first anniversary. It doesn't entirely go as intended.

Notes for the Chapter:

Welcome to the last chapter! Thank you so much to everyone who has kept up with this fic and sent me so many lovely messages <3 You all inspire me to write this little family so much!

Keith knew Lance was planning something. Lance wasn't great at deception overall, and Keith could tell when he was being a little sneaky.

Plus, Keith had straight-up asked Lance like three whole times what he wanted to do for their anniversary, and every time, Lance had only answered with, *"it's a secret."* He'd been increasingly smug about it, too, and Keith, who was not a fan of surprises, was becoming increasingly nervous.

On top of it all, Keith's day had been astoundingly shitty, starting with the part where one of the interns collided with him in the hallway and spilled coffee on him, and ending with a traffic jam that doubled his drive home. This was why Keith liked working from home.

He stepped inside, shaking snow out of his hair, hissing curses he'd never want Oliver to hear when he stepped in a little puddle of melted snow. As he passed through the archway into the living room, he saw Lance, dressed in a dark teal button-down and that one blazer that fit him way too damn well for his own good, the first two buttons of his shirt undone and his hair combed back from his face. There was a tie around his collar but he didn't seem intent on tying it—probably waiting on Keith to do it up for him. He looked gorgeous, doing up the cuffs of his sleeve with unbroken concentration, the quirk of his lips the only sign that he'd seen Keith enter the room.

"Hey," Keith said, at a loss for words that were more than three letters long.

"Hey, babe." Lance smiled at him fully, and god, his eyes had never looked so blue. Keith felt bedraggled in comparison, from the bags under his eyes to his still-damp hair, tangling at the ends. "How was your day?"

"Honestly? Kind of shitty," Keith said. He took Lance's hands in his and Lance flinched, because Keith's fingers were still freezing, and then pulled Keith's hands in to his chest to warm them up. Keith leaned their foreheads together, not hugging Lance like he wanted to, because his jacket sleeves were wet with melted snow, too, and he didn't want to ruin Lance's blazer.

"Aww, no," Lance said, kissing Keith's forehead, "you wanna tell me about it?"

"Not really," Keith sighed. "I just... what are we doing tonight?" He didn't mean for it to come out sounding so resigned.

"Well, I made reservations at this restaurant Hunk recommended," Lance said, letting go of one of Keith's hands so that he could run a thumb over his cheek, "but something tells me you feel more like staying in."

Keith sighed, relief flooding through him, and sagged forward to rest his head on Lance's shoulder. "Yeah. I'm sorry, I know you had stuff planned, and it's our first anniversary, and—"

"It's okay, Keith," Lance said, cutting him off before he even had time to spiral. "We can go out to dinner next week or something, okay?"

Keith nodded, teeth worrying his lower lip because he still felt a pang of guilt. Lance had planned everything, had taken Oliver to the Holts, had gotten so dressed up for him, and all Keith wanted to do was lay around on the couch in sweatpants.

"Keith," Lance said, adjusting some of his messy hair, "we'll have more anniversaries to have fancy dinners for. I'd rather you enjoy tonight than let it make you even more stressed out." He said it like he was completely certain, this would be the first of many, that they had next year and then

some. It made Keith want to melt into him, to herd the both of them back toward his bedroom—but he had to admit, he was starving. And he really wanted to not be wearing his work clothes and his jacket anymore.

"I think I'm gonna jump in the shower really quick," he said, "and then dinner. Of the not fancy kind."

"Okay," Lance said, kissing him again, on the temple this time, making some of Keith's hair stick to his skin. "I'll order some take-out, yeah?"

"Yeah." Keith smoothed his knuckles down the lapels of Lance's blazer, then grabbed them, tugging Lance in to kiss him, and kiss him again. It ended up going on much longer than Keith planned, but he never minded that, and Lance's hands found their way under his jacket to hold his hips, his hands warm through his button-down. "You're so gorgeous," he said, and felt Lance's lips curve into a smile against his.

"Am I gonna have to get in the shower with you?" Lance joked, and it sort of sounded like a good idea for a second, but Keith shook his head, pressing one last kiss to the corner of Lance's mouth.

"I'll just be a few minutes," he said, and Lance hurried him off, already scrolling through his phone for the number to that Vietnamese place they liked.

When Keith got out of the shower, Lance was dressed in a pair of Keith's sweatpants and a T-shirt with his softest flannel over it, and there was a plastic take-out bag on the counter. Lance was already flicking through Netflix to find them something to watch, although Keith found himself not really minding what it was.

"Hey," Lance said, smiling at him, looking at Keith the way Keith had been staring when he walked into the house to Lance in a suit and tie. Keith knew he wasn't worthy of that kind of heated look right now, having just thrown on a pair of plaid pajama bottoms and a hoodie that must've been Lance's, because it had *Garrison Elementary* printed across the front and a lion on the back.

Lance had once told him that he'd want him no matter what he was wearing because he knew what was underneath, though.

"Did you get pho?" Keith asked, peering in the bag, which answered the question for him.

"Yeah, 'course. You feeling a little better?"

Keith nodded, opening one of the plastic containers and pouring it into a bowl, letting Lance do the same with the other. "Shower fixed at least half of it, I think," he said.

"I found a movie that looks just exceedingly stupid," Lance said, bringing up the summary. It was a rom-com with a lot of hijinks involving a body swap, made in the early 2000s and probably riding on the success of Freaky Friday. Perfect.

Lance was right, the movie was exceedingly stupid, but Keith didn't mind when it meant Lance was laughing his head off every couple seconds as a character did something ridiculous. When they finished their food, Keith snuggled up to Lance, laying between his legs, head on his chest, barely watching the movie anymore. He was listening to Lance's heartbeat and the rumble in his chest as he questioned the lead character's motivations more than he was listening to the dialogue.

By the time the movie ended, neither of them were paying attention anymore. Keith had rolled onto his stomach so that he was fully atop Lance, and they'd been making out like teenagers since before the credits started to roll. The generic-sounding pop song in the background of the credits faded out and Netflix popped up with another suggestion, so Lance paused for a second to flick it off before it auto-played another stupid rom-com.

"Happy anniversary, sweetheart," Lance said, before going right back to kissing him, his hands shoved up under Keith's hoodie, their legs tangling on the couch. It had Keith wishing, as he often did, that this could be an every night sort of thing. Sure, he saw Lance almost every day, but on most weekdays, that was just a short conversation as he picked up Oliver from school, maybe dinner at the house afterward. On weekends, Lance stayed at

Keith's place, and with Christmas break coming up, they'd have more time to spend together, but Keith still missed Lance on the nights his bed was half-empty.

That was what had him saying, "Lance, I wanted to ask you something," as the two of them settled down, still curled together on the couch.

"Hm?" Lance was playing with his hair, running his fingers through his bangs because they were the most dry.

Keith swallowed, the words suddenly stuck in his throat. "Do you want to move in?" he asked, finally, and Lance tensed, but it was in a good way, the kind of way that meant he was almost shaking with uncontained excitement.

"Yeah! Of course I do!" he said, wrapping Keith up in his arms a little tighter. "Oh my god, I thought you weren't gonna ask until later—and my lease is up in January, so I wasn't sure, like, should I renew it?"

"You definitely shouldn't," Keith said, burying his face in Lance's neck. He was wearing that fancy cologne and it still hadn't worn off.

"Gonna be honest, I hate going home to an empty apartment some nights," Lance said. He was petting Keith's hair again, scratching gently at the nape of his neck. "It's like, I don't wanna be that codependent guy who's all sad if he isn't hanging out with his boyfriend, but..."

"I get it," Keith said, "believe me, I get it." He laughed under his breath, fingers running in little circles on Lance's chest. "God. Oliver's gonna be *thrilled*."

"Oh, man. Yeah, the little guy's gonna explode. *Two whole dads, all the time*."

"Yep. All the time," Keith said, tipping Lance's chin down to kiss him again, and again, and a half a dozen times more.

It was the best anniversary he'd ever celebrated.

Notes for the Chapter:

In case you're worried, this is not the end of dad AU! I already have the next fic in the series planned :D

In the meantime, you can check out [my dad AU tag](#) on tumblr, where I post a lotta pictures of them and also updates and stuff about the AU!

Thanks again for making this fic a joy to write and talk about <3